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LOVE'S LONGING.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY PHILA H. CASE.

A woman, fair as fair can be,
Is going out far o'er the sea,
If ever a glimpse of her be seen,
It will be a glimpse of the better far.

Longing, till the West star
Shall show the silver evening star,
And waves moon o'er the better far,
Waiting on the land without one day,
And down the lonely strand they lay.

And of all on earth to her was none
So dear as the beloved one,
She bore her toward the setting sun,
So through the dreary waste of years
She watched, sick with anxious fears,
And eyes full of unshed tears.

God play him, poor waiting wife,
For neither wind, nor wave, nor tide
Will ever bring him to thy side.
And oh! God help us all, we pray,
Who dwell from day to day,
Tempted to step as if they dare.

Longing with wild impatient pain,
That thrills through throbbing heart and brain,
To clasp our darling once again,
And whisper to the name may be,
Whether 'tis death or land or sea,
That keeps them far from thee and me.

Only his playing love may know
How deep our pain, can only show
Our wandering footsteps where to go.

THE SWAMP OUTLAWS; OR, A SECRET OF TWENTY YEARS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY CHARLES MORRIS.

CHAPTER XXIII.

LOVE'S DENIAL.

The fabled constable rose furiously to his feet, pistol in hand, and fired wildly into the gloom. The without waiting for the result of his shot, he dashed through the window after the fugitive. At the same instant the others rushed out, through the doors, leaving Howard alone in the apartment. They had hardly departed before Nellie entered, alarmed by the report of the pistol. She stopped in surprise and embarrassment at seeing Mr. Howard alone.

"What has happened? Why are you alone? Is any one hurt?"
"No one. They are in pursuit of the fugitive."
"The fugitive?"

"I forgot that you were not present. I refer to Simon Du Bar, to whom I have given his real name of John Middleton, and named him as the agent of the murderous efforts upon our lives."

"What! Is it possible? And he has escaped?"
"Yes. He leaped through the window. The others are in full chase of him."

"Tell me, Mr. Howard, is it all a dream? Or is it true that I have been bearing a false name, and am a mistress to a fortune?"
"It is all true."

"I will not be happier, I cannot be happier, than I have been here, with only this small farm, a contented mind, and true friends. But I thank you all the same, and suppose when I fully return to my senses, and to the realization of what can be done with that amount of money, I can better appreciate your kindness. But have you really continued here and risked your life, so repeatedly, with no other aim than the single purpose of befriending me?"

"Now I won't consent to be made a hero of. I have run no great risk."
"You have! You glorify, noble soul! You have dared death every day in my service! I care not what you may think! What any one may think! I will—and she finished the sentence by clasping the astonished man in her arms with a warm and loving embrace, giving him a good kiss. Then, blushing as redly as the morning sky, yet with a low laugh as of amused surprise at her own temerity, she released him, and ran like a guilty thing for the door.

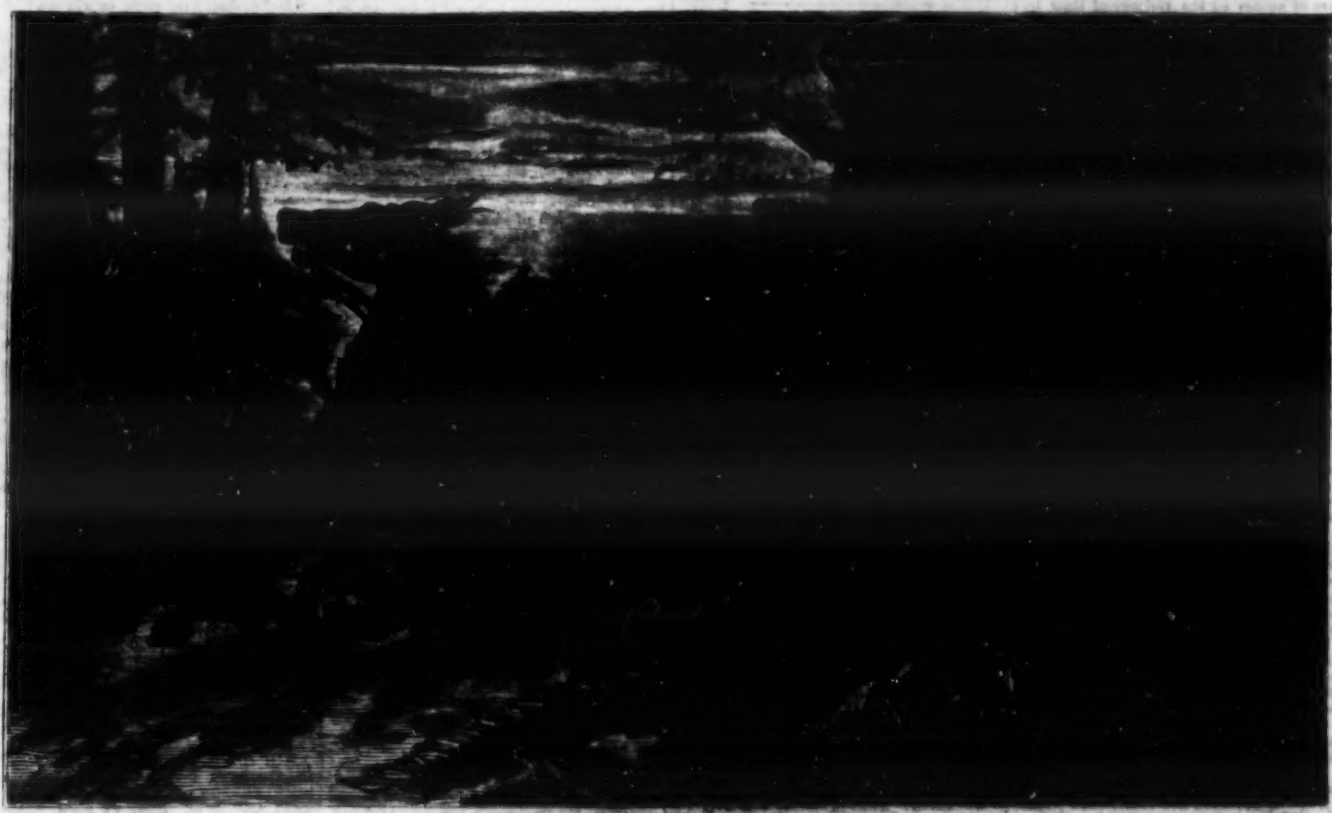
Her hand was on the latch before he recovered from the shock of delight and astonishment with which the sudden assault had transfused him. But with a single leap he reached the hall just after her, and caught her by the hand as she placed her foot on the first step of the stairs, anxious to hide the confusion arising from her impulsive action in her own apartment.

"Glad!" he cried. "Can you see from me, after filling my soul with such joy as I never knew before? There must be more than gratitude in your action. Gratitude never yet gave such a kiss. Nellie, dear Nellie, I love you! Love you with all the fervor of my soul, with the deepest and truest affection! Oh, tell me that it is returned! But I know it is! words may be dissembled; impulse cannot. I have the proof of your love yet burning on my lips."

"Don't be too sure of that," she sanely replied, turning her face away to hide the happy light that was glowing on every feature.

"Then give me its assurance. You must! You shall be cried, as she struggled to escape. "You shall not go till you have answered my appeal."

"Hush! They are returning. I hear their steps! Let me go!"
"Yes, or no? They are short words. Yet one will thrill me with happiness, the other plunge me into despair. Speak, dear



THE ABDUCTION.

Nellie. Have I offended you?" as she made an ineffectual little effort to escape. "But I am forgetting. You are an heiress now, I a poor mercenary nobody. And I have let myself be surprised into a confession which I intended to conceal forever in my heart. Go. I have been too presumptuous. And she released his unwilling prisoner.

But there was no longer any desire to fly. She turned to him a face beaming with love. "How dare you accuse me so, you cruel, cruel, dear, kind old soul, whom I love as I love my life?" and she held her lips in such tempting proximity that he fastened on them like the bee on the flower, taking all their honeyed sweetness in one long draught. Then, as footsteps sounded on the porch without, she turned and fled like a frightened fawn up the stairs.

CHAPTER XXIV.

REGULATIONS ENFORCED.

The fugitive had escaped. Favored by the darkness of the night, and the cover afforded by the wooded glen so near the house, he had readily reached the pine forest beyond. Accustomed as he was to his gloomy avocations, pursuit was useless. The faint illumination of the sky failed to penetrate here, and in the dense darkness of the woods his pursuers groped like blind men.

The squire, with Solomon and one or two others, perceived, after the first hot burst of excitement was over, that it was quite visionary to hope to catch the fugitive with all these circumstances in his favor. These returned after a few minutes' absence. The others continued in pursuit, but one by one returned, till the whole party had reassembled, with the exception of two who failed to return at all. It was afterwards found that one of these missing persons found his way into the village after an hour's wandering. The other became so inextricably entangled in the darkness of the woodland, and came into so many fearful collisions with trunks of unseasoned trees, that he was finally compelled to stretch himself on a bed of soft moss, and wait till morning. No great hardship that soft summer night.

"Well, I like a joke," said Solomon. "But this one's a mite too good for my liking. What laugh there is in it is all on 't'other side."

"It was too bad to let the fellow slip out of our fingers that way," said the squire. "But he is evidently a practiced athlete. And besides no one dreamed that he had any thought of flight."

"I didn't dream it," said Solomon. "But I was wide awake to it. And for all that I judged what he was up to—I just sat still and gave him a clear track."

"But he must be caught. He, and the whole gang of outlaws at his back. This series of outrages has almost reached its climax. It is quite time we were turning the tables."

"The fellow's given us the slip, entire," said the constable, entering at this moment. "An' the worst of it, he give me a slip of his fist first that was worse than a mule kick. Hang him, I'll be even with him yet for't, or it'll be queer."

Mr. Howard entered at this moment. He could not, for his life, have returned to the room with but a short interval, to cool the fever of happiness that burnt too palpable in his eyes, and to bring himself more into rapport with the base carthiness of every-day life; he was just descending from the heaven of first love's sweet confusion.

"Why, Howard, my dear fellow," cried Solomon, "I thought you were still after him like a blood-hound. You did hunt him down well, that's sure, and come down on him at the end like a load of brick on a nigger's brain-pan. But there he sat the whole time just ready to jump the first step made towards him. But hang him, let him

go. To think of our little Nell being a rich heiress! It come near taking my breath when you let it out so sudden. And you've got all the proofs in good train?"

"Everything ready. But will be made at once, unless they are wise and hand over the estate without putting us to the trouble to bring it into court. I have everything so arranged that they have not the ghost of a chance."

"Well, that'll bring up our runaway friend with a sharp turn of the rope, that I think will hurt some. But don't you fear my life?" and she held her lips in such tempting proximity that he fastened on them like the bee on the flower, taking all their honeyed sweetness in one long draught. Then, as footsteps sounded on the porch without, she turned and fled like a frightened fawn up the stairs.

"I do not fear him. Forewarned is forearmed. I will see that he does not take me at an advantage again; and with a fair chance, I would not shrink from the whole gang. I shall certainly remain here till I have finished my work, despite the bludge."

Solomon alone saw the peculiar look that crossed his face as he spoke, a look strikingly at variance with his ballingent words; and the heart of the poor fellow was troubled within him as he thought of his own hopeless love for Nellie, and feared that this expression betokened that it was a hopeless and accepted love that formed the secret reason of his rival's determination to remain. More and more he had sunk into the gulf of despair, and was finding that the hand of Hally Price had wonderful power to pull him out again. He was in that uncomfortable transition state in which the heart, repelled from the door at which it has been knocking, will enter the first door that lies open before it, in search of love.

"But what's to be done next?" said the constable. "That's the only question that worries me."

"I think one or two of us better take horse and ride over to Joe Bradley's," replied Solomon. "He's got all his baggage there, an' knows that if he don't strike for it to-night it'll be too late. If we can get there in time we may nab him."

"Which is a mighty poor show. But I'm with you to try it," said the constable. "And as it is my way home, I shall be a third," said Howard.

"But, mind you, we've got mighty little time to lose," said the constable. "A fellow that can jump like a panther, will not let the grass grow under his feet. So let's for the saddle."

But it took some time to get the horses ready for the road, and fifteen minutes elapsed before they started.

The three horsemen rode as rapidly as the darkness rendered at all safe. As they at length drew up at the door of the Horst Horse Inn, it was to see the host on the porch, looking down the road in the opposite direction.

"What's up, Joe?" cried Solomon. "I'm taking a farewell look after Mr. Du Bar. He's just left me. Yaid up like a man. Hired my best team, and is off to the railroad depot to catch the night train."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE ABDUCTION.

The constable alone rode on. Before he could reach the depot the train had passed. No person answering the description of Du Bar had purchased a ticket. But he might have got aboard without a ticket. Bradley's team had certainly been there, and was sent back in the charge of a hanger-on at the depot. The fugitive had escaped.

Still it was not certain that he had left that part of the country. There were several stations within a few miles of each other, at

any of which he might have got off. There was a chance then, that he might reappear on the scene at any unexpected moment.

The news of Nellie Brown's good fortune and of the unveiling of Du Bar, few rapidly from mouth to mouth, until, variously embellished, it reached every ear within several miles around. It is difficult to appreciate the wonder and intense interest excited by such an occurrence in a quiet country region, that has not its two excitements in a year; difficult, that is, for citizens, who live in an atmosphere of excitement.

The heroine of the story herself took perhaps less interest in it than any of her friends. Not that she failed to appreciate the greatness of the change which it promised her; but that a deeper and richer story had just been breathed into her ear. Her soul leaped for joy, not for the base fortune of money, but for the abounding wealth of love that had been proffered her.

Hally Price called on her several days after the occurrence just detailed. She had been absent from home, and thus had failed to hear of the good fortune that had fallen to her friend, until some time after it had become the common property of the whole neighborhood.

No grass grew under her feet as she made her way, full of gladness and the desire to congratulate, to her friend's residence. She was far too unselfish to feel even a tinge of envy.

Nellie sat on the porch, brooding in the sunlight and in the happy glow of pleasant feelings, when her visitor broke upon her, with the impetuosity and warmth of a thunderbolt.

"Oh, you hateful, abominable thing!" she cried, emphasizing each word with an explosive kiss. "What do you want with this fellow? You, who are as happy as a queen now? And why couldn't you wait till I got home? What business had you to rob me of the chance to take part in the very tragic denouement which I am told you have had?"

"On you! I won't notice you when you become a millionaire, if you are going to treat me this way."

"But, Hally, you know that time and tide wait for no man; nor woman either. It is not my fault that I have become an heiress. I wouldn't have done it if I had not thought it would meet with your approbation. But if you will only forgive me this time I will take care not to do so again."

"Well, you are forgiven; though it is more than you deserve. And to think of it! That smooth, specious Simon Du Bar, unmasked and proved a traitor and would-be murderer; and your aunt his accomplice!"

"No aunt of mine, thank Heaven. A scene you must have had! And what has become of the precious Miss Wilson?"

"She left the house that very night. No body interfered with her. I do not know where she has gone. I have spoken no word to her since hearing of her infamy."

"She bore you no love. That I have long seen. And little to me; though, for that matter, she received little from me. At the same time, you will need to keep her in sight. There may be resistance to your claim, and her evidence be required."

"Oh, I will leave all that to the men," answered Nellie. "But just think of it! I, a little, insignificant me, the heiress of a great fortune! It is all a dream to me, Hally. I cannot realize it. I, who have spent my life on this quiet little plantation, to be laden with riches and launched into all the excitement of city life. How will my poor brain bear it all?"

"Need for me. I will give you lessons in dignity. My example will teach you how to bear fortune with equanimity."

"You? If I get such a madcap as you to teach me behavior, I will need—"
"There, now you are going to talk lan-

der. Hold your tongue till you can better understand my virtues. But if you are really blind to the advantages of having me for a mistress of ceremonies, I don't know what else you are to do, unless it be to get married. And how are you to know now but that the man who asks your hand is some mercenary wretch, who is only in love with your money?"

"There is no fear of that," and Nellie's face glowed with a crimson that was not lost on her friend.

"Not? Why not? Why, girl, you are positively blushing. What has happened? Like Solomon—" she stopped, as a sudden sneaking fear rushed upon her.

"No, no! We are friends. That is all we ever shall be. I leave Solomon to you. He is half yours now. With me out of the way, you—"

"Hush, now, Nellie Brown. He does not care for me, and never will. He is not the man to love twice."

"Much you know about men. I tell you he is half in love with you, and shall yet be in so deep, that only your merciful hand can pull him out."

"Now you are making fun of me. Where has he shown the sign of such a feeling? He is even becoming cold and distant with me. He that was as true with me as a brother. Nellie, I have given up all hopes of such fruition. Don't let us talk of such unprofitable subjects. Who is your friend?"

"I did not say I was a friend."

"But you see I am good at guessing. You are so sure about him that you must be sure of him. Who is he?"

"You are so good at guessing; can you not guess?"

"What? And you are really in earnest? You've got a real, live, declared lover? And you have been playing with me for an hour, talking about money, with something so much more interesting in your fancy all the time. You shall be punished for this. You shall tell me the whole affair, word for word, just as it happened."

Nellie turned away her face, with a new feeling of shame upon her at her friend's request.

"Come, come," continued Hally. "You are not going to cheat me of so sweet a morsel. Why if it is ever my lot to have a lover you shall have the story of our love-making, drawn out to the last syllable of detail, and highly embellished too, I promise you that."

"But I have no story."

"As if I would believe anything of the kind! Put on your hat. Come with me. You shall breathe the sweet tale to the winds of heaven, and to my ears, where there will be no eavesdroppers but the birds and the butterflies. To tell me that there is no story! Come, you shall not escape so easily. And she drew her almost by main force to the garden, through which they slowly paced towards the glen in the rear.

All that they said is not for us to detail. First, that we have given the essential portions of it; secondly, that it is none of our business to tell the love confessions of two young girls; thirdly, that we do not know what they said. Headless whither they went, in the deep interest of that story, old forever, yet forever new, they strayed on up the glen, unknowing how far they had gone. At length they found the ravine merging into the level surface of the pine forest. They had traversed the whole length of the glen, and had emerged into the woodland.

girls that there were part of the Budd gang. Their sudden appearance indicated that they had been concealed behind the trees. For what purpose? A terrible shudder at the heart came upon the girls as they turned and thought to walk unconsciously past these fearful sentinels, who stood so silently awaiting their movements. At their first step forward one of the men started before them, saying:

"Either way, ladies. We don't want to put you to any inconvenience, but reckon as how you'll take a little journey with us."

Nellie was so overcome with dread that for the moment she was unable to speak. Her friend burst out indignantly:

"What do you mean, fellow? How dare you attempt to hinder our passage? Move out of our way this instant, or you shall be sorry for it."

"Hobbs on, my dear little lady, but we'll run the risk. You've got to go with us, as there's no use in any plaver."

"Go with you!" said Nellie, in a faint, stuttering voice.

"Just so, an' there's no two ways about it."

"What do you mean, fellows?" cried Hally, unconsciously. "Come, Nellie, let them attempt to stop us if they dare. If they lay a hand on you, raise the village with your cry."

"For ought as well save your breath, my dear," said the man, with a hoarse laugh. "We've got no time to waste here. Just show them the way, boys, an' if they won't walk, we'll have to carry them."

At this instant his eye, which was roving continuously with the cautious instinct of the scout, caught sight of a small body crouching under the low bushes in front, and working round for the head of the glen.

With a fierce bound he started in pursuit. Immediately the shuddering figure rose, and the shrewd face of Pete was seen turned intelligently towards his mistress as he leaped past them with the agility of a hare, and ran rapidly for the glen. With the spring of a panther in pursuit the outlaw dashed after him. For a minute the chase appeared in full view as pursuer and pursued rushed into the bosky opening of the glen. The next they were lost in the winding path, and nothing but an occasional impression from the outlaw told of the pursuit.

His companions crowded down nearer the glen to watch the chase.

"Now, Nellie," whispered her companion, clasping her hand, and dragging her off in flight in the opposite direction.

This movement was instantly perceived by the outlaws, and before the fugitives had taken ten steps, they felt the strong grasp of the men upon their shoulders. With screams burst from their lips at this rude detention; Nellie's from nervous dread, Hally's with the hope of making herself heard.

The captives instantly stifled these cries, clasping their mouths with fierce pressure that almost made them seek to scream again with pain.

"Stop yer blasted pipes, can't yer?" said one of these, a fellow with the face of a mule, and the expression of a murderer.

"If yer whippersnapper again, turned if I don't clap gas into yer mouth."

"What do you want with us?" cried Hally, freeing her lips from the rude fingers of her captor.

"Yell and out when the time comes. But of yer don't walk with us quiet, an' keep yer tongues still, we'll have to carry you and gag you too."

"Walk with you quiet!" cried Hally, indignantly wrenching herself loose from his grasp, and darting in rapid flight through the bushes, screaming at every step.

With a horrid impression the man pursued her. After a short chase the indomitable girl was again captured. Without a word, the ruffian drew a large handkerchief from his pocket, and proceeded to bind it across her lips, so tightly as to quite forbid speech. She struggled so desperately that he was forced to call his remaining companion to his assistance in order to accomplish his object. Finally he only succeeded in neutralizing her resistance by tying her hands firmly behind her.

Nellie, to whom it appeared that the chance of escape was utterly hopeless, and who lacked the strength and energy of her friend, beheld with mingled hope and fear this desperate effort at flight, though without a thought of emulating it. The leader of the outlaws now appeared, bearing on his shoulder the minute form of Pete, whom he had tied hand and foot, and carried as he would have carried a sack of corn.

"Get ahead with ye as ever ye can," he cried. "We'll have ter take this wrigglin' little nig with us, or he'll raise the country. If the gals won't walk, jest tie them, an' carry them. We can't lose time for their foolery."

The cavalcade instantly started forward through the wood, even Hally consenting to walk when she perceived that the villains really meant to subject her to the disagreeable alternative of being carried.

For a mile they proceeded thus in silence, at a speed which showed that the captives feared danger. This brought them to the creek at a point where it was crossed by a lane leading up from the village, a rough bridge crossing the water.

A light carriage, with two horses, stood here by the roadside, occupied by a person resembling in dress and general appearance those who now approached him.

"Anybody passed, Jim?"

"No. The coast's clear. But where's the cap?"

"Denno. He went down to look arter the gal, when she walked plumb into our hands. We'll have to wait here, I reckon, till he comes."

"Twont do. You stay here an' meet him. We'll have to get. But what do yer want with the two gals and the nigger?"

"Had to take them all, or we'd had the country on us."

"But we can't take the one."

"Leave 't'other here then. But we'll hev ter tie her till ye get a start. Somebody will unloose her."

"An' the nigger?"

A LOVE STORY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.
BY H. CAYDEN.

The western sky is all aglow
With sunset's red and gold,
The clouds are all ablaze
In the light of the day.
The sun is low and the moon is high,
The stars are all out,
The night is all around,
The day is all behind.

Far off in the distance
The lights of the city
Are all aglow,
The smoke is all around,
The day is all behind,
The night is all around.

Dear old love, my love,
The night is all around,
The day is all behind,
The night is all around,
The day is all behind.

Ab! don't let your love
Be all around,
The day is all behind,
The night is all around,
The day is all behind.

SEVEN GRAVES;

THE HEIRS OF DUNLEATH.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.
BY ESTHER SERLE KENNETH.

CHAPTER XXV.

SUSPICION.

The dead wife of John Var, Granny's son, had been related to Paul Fyett, and unlike his mother, John had been a friend of the Fyett, rather than of the Andersons. Since the latter's death he had gone about with a gloomy brow. His humble friends wondered that he took his mother's death so grievously to heart. She was old, and had long been expected to die.

But gradually an ominous whisper circulated. It was intimated that John Var believed that his mother had not died a natural death.

He was the man to brood long over a wrong—slow to execute a purpose. Days and weeks went by while he gloomed and pulled his mustache, held his boy absent-mindedly between his knees, alone, or went among his mates in the town, and forgot to be social.

It was a wintry day that he walked to town on a errand to the blacksmith's.

In Blackmore wood he came upon Paul Fyett, falling trees. Paul paused in his labors, leaned upon his axe, and the two men shook hands.

"Sharp weather, this 'ere, John," said Paul, "rough walking. Road frozen hard as wood in the roads. You should have a wife to bring you a pair of hot coffee by noon, when you're outtin' 'ere. A good wife 'd do that for her man."

"Paul's bluff face grew red; he frowned. "No girl I have but the one. You know, John Var."

"Rose, is it—Rose Fyett—yes. And she's not ready yet, Paul."

"She'll never be ready for me, she tells me. By the way, John, she's got a secret. Rose says, that'll not be a secret long. I'll spread it till she can't hold up her head in town for shame."

"What? There's nothin' to be said against Rose Fyett! I'll not believe it, man."

"Does an Anderson ever mean fair by a girl? An' that young one of Dunleath has been often seen at the cottage this autumn."

"An' that's all ye can say? Nothing more, Paul? An' that's all ye can say? Rose is a good girl, and young Angus Anderson is not like the other. The other—"

He scowled more darkly than his companion. Paul Fyett showed a moment's shame. He began making some lame excuses about how he had been treated by Rose.

But his companion's mind seemed to have left the subject. John Var's mood also darkened. He muttered an oath, with his brows bent and stormy.

"It's some two good for it, the old one. And he's got a blinder crime than that on his head, say I!" he muttered.

"Paul play when she died—was there?" asked Paul, catching at the words. "Tell us, John. Do you say that your mother didn't die a natural death?"

"I say I!" exclaimed John Var, striking a fist into his open palm. "The other laid his heavy hand on his shoulder."

"An' isn't the law of the land as good for one man as for another? Does on the black board! And I'll say 'by ye, John.' That day a writ for the arrest of Black Norton, was served in the town."

CHAPTER XXVI.

DARKNESS.

Black Norton laid Theodore into the room where Angus sat musing upon the hearth, his arm still in its sling. There was a rose-colored ribbon in his hand, which he hastily concealed as he came hurriedly to his feet at their entrance.

His first act was to wheel forward a chair for Theodore, which he proffered with unconcealed surprise at her appearance there. Then he turned interrogatively to his father.

Black Norton laid a heavy hand upon his shoulder. "I have brought you a wife, Angus. Do you know her? Judge Crowningshield's daughter."

Angus had not recognized Theodore. This shadowy, pallid, gentle girl bore no resemblance to the buoyant figure he had seen only on horseback. His surprise was great at seeing a girl at Dunleath. Let me mention that he had not in his invalid seclusion heard of Theodore's disappearance from her home.

"Miss Crowningshield!" he murmured, and spoke apologetically.

"His daughter—the Judge's only daughter," said Norton, triumphantly. "You will marry her, my boy."

"I cannot!" he broke suddenly from Angus, with a passionate thought of Rose.

"You will marry her now, to-day," continued Norton, unheeding, and intoxicated with his exultant thought. "He may know where she is, if he likes—the Judge. But you will not care to let them take her away; no, she is very pretty," putting his hand on the crown of her braids. "Mrs. Angus Norton of Dunleath, the home of the Andersons for seven generations, ha! ha! Is it a sweet revenge?"

Angus, pained, mortified by his father's

mad plan, Angus could only repeat, slowly: "Father, I cannot, I cannot marry this lady!"

"Cannot? Pish! Why not?" blustered Norton. "Because I love another woman!" returned Angus, desperately.

"Young fool!" thundered Norton, in sudden rage, "are you going to balk me?—you for whom I have brought about this revenge? for whom I have lived for weeks in hourly danger of being executed, lynched? Have you the spirit to make me regret for your insolence? Another woman? Bah! Who is she?"

"Rose Fyett," calmly.

"A ploughman's wench! Ha! ha! But it's not necessary to marry that sort of girl. But you must marry this young lady. It is ten o'clock. A good horse will bring a clergyman in three hours from some of the more remote towns. A little risk, but I have run a good many. Put Jupiter to the buggy. Drive fast; answer no questions as you return."

"Father, I will not go. This thing cannot be."

One fierce glance at the young man's pale, determined face, and Norton rushed like a fiend upon him. He would have killed him on the spot, but for the agility of his escape. Angus was crippled; if he had not been, he would not have raised a hand against his father.

He retreated before the madman—opened a door—disappeared, and fled.

The outside entrance was left open by his flight. The stinging, frosty air rushed into the room, bathing Theodore's pale face and heavy eyes. She drew a quick breath, and rose to her feet.

Norton had followed Angus, but he came back from the open door with a sudden change upon him. He closed the door, hurriedly barred it, but not until Theodore, aroused from her apathy, had flung herself upon the floor, towards it, screaming madly: "Father! Father! Father!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

REVENGE.

Heavy blows upon the outside door resounded through the house. Days and weeks went by while he gloomed and pulled his mustache, held his boy absent-mindedly between his knees, alone, or went among his mates in the town, and forgot to be social.

He listened for a moment, then turned towards the door by which he had entered. He disappeared, looking at the doors after him as he retreated to his private apartments. An instant afterwards there was a crash; the crowd had effected an entrance, and besieged the barred inner door. It soon gave way. They poured into the room, surrounding the prone figure of Theodore.

The awe-stricken men were almost silent for an instant; then there was a cry: "The Judge! The Judge!"

For the Judge and Paul Iretton were among the company. The crowd made way for them as they came into the room. The former's hair fell white as snow from under his hat (no great was the change in him), as he bent over the prostrate form of his child.

My daughter!

The faint, amazed cry broke from him. Kneeling beside her, he lifted her head upon his arm, and turned her emaciated, lovely face to the light. An involuntary cry of pity and indignation broke from the company.

"She is starved to death! Find him! the murderer!" exclaimed a voice.

In a tumult of impressions, they began the search.

Paul Iretton headed them. They hurried from room to room. They came, at length, to the oaken door, at the foot of the staircase.

"It is locked; he is beyond here!" said the sheriff.

"Waste no time—down with it!" exclaimed Paul.

But it stoutly resisted their united blows. "Blow it up!" shouted John Var. "Tis the only way."

But just then a strange roaring fell on their ears—a faint sound like distant musketry—and then they smelled smoke.

Smoke? The place was full of it. The old house trembled. The blue, curling cloud crept from every crevice—forked flames flashed after the snapping and roaring defensed them.

"Fire! The house is on fire!" they cried. They fled, in consternation, as they retreated. Had Black Norton chosen to die in the flames of Dunleath, rather than be taken?—or was the fire an accident?

But he did not come forth, and no attempt was made to overcome the fearful consuming element. The crowd retreated, and the circle widened about the burning building. The oaken timbers threw out an overpowering heat—the walls fell; the flames leaped, and the black smoke poured skyward. In one brief hour Dunleath was no more.

The crowd, which had increased (for the conflagration was most unusual), were amazed, and greatly excited. They had the suspicion, which time confirmed to a certainty, that Black Norton had perished in the ruins.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE HAPPY END.

Theodore had shown signs of consciousness before she was borne to her home. As a carriage bore her through the streets, leaning upon her father's bosom, the bells of the town broke into peals of joy.

No words can relate the consequent excitement and joy of her friends, no phrases express their abhorrence of Black Norton of Dunleath, or their indignation.

When word came that charred fragments of his body had been found among the ruins, they expressed horror, but so deep was their sense of injury and the dreadful justice of the event, that not one sentiment of pity was heard amongst them.

For weeks Theodore lay in her chamber, surrounded by fondest ministrations. She was weak and gentle as a little child. Her father wept with a parent's love, and trembled with a man's indignation, as he felt her frail, weak arms about his neck. Carefully they led her up from the door of death. Slowly her face and form regained their rounded outlines—gradually the smile and the rose-flush came back to her face. The beautiful daughter and sister was at length restored.

One day she asked for Paul Iretton.

She sat in her little boudoir, Gem perched upon the arm of her chair, with her arms about her neck, when Iretton entered the room. Theodore sent the child away, and turned gently to her old lover.

"Paul! I am grateful for your love."

Her coldness and pride were gone forever. She had never been so womanly, so lovely before her suffering. And to Paul Iretton the hardships and trials he had undergone fell out of consideration compared to the bliss of that hour. He would have undergone them all again for the sweet surprise of her acceptance of him as the dearest friend of her life. He was not prepared for such a surrender, and had already taken up his role of depression and despair, hoping nothing, asking nothing for his devotedness to her cause. His triumphant happiness was inexpressible.

And our two other lovers were happy. Angus Norton stood straight from his father's house to old Deb's hut, and demanded to see Rose. Before news of the burning of Dunleath and Black Norton's death reached him they were married.

As seemed fitting, the fragments of Black Norton's body were interred with those of his forefathers. The seventh grave was made—and the people said that the curse

was at an end. When it was known that Angus Norton had made Rose Fyett his honorable wife, he found himself suddenly surrounded by honest friends. "The young man should have a fair chance—he had shown himself a man," they said, and rich and poor offered him a friendly hand.

Fortune also smiled upon him. Among the stones and crumbled statues and blackened timbers of Dunleath was found an iron chest somewhat injured by the fire, but within, intact, was a box of steel, closed by a curious spring. The letter was delivered into Angus Norton's hands.

On opening it, it was found filled to the brim with gold coins. In all, it was a moderate fortune. Holding an impulse to go abroad, Angus Norton went to the city, and devoted himself to making a home for his beautiful young wife upon the site of the old one. Here he resolved to abide, and if children were given him, to sustain and rear them by noble example, that the new Dunleath might shed upon the old one a fairer fame.

And in time Rose did become the mother of two noble boys and a fair little daughter, all of whom inherited the high-toned, generous traits of their parents, and are not over-matched even by the children of Theodore and Paul Iretton.

Paul Fyett took the loss of Rose with final good grace. Such disappointments are hard for better men to bear, and Paul's bitterness and passion were only natural. He found a good wife at last, and grew reconciled to fate.

John Var continued in Angus Norton's employ. He finally married a second time, and was also fortunate in his marriage. The second wife was a kind mother to the little Deb.

Old Deb received from Paul Iretton a large part for her assistance, which had turned her search in the right direction. The chain of gold and ruby cross were lost by Theodore on the night of her desperate and unsuccessful attempt to escape from Black Norton.

After Rose married Angus Norton and left Deb's hut, much to the old woman's consternation, she repaid her rude kindness and honest care by a faithful care of her last days. Deb could not be persuaded to leave her hut for a more civilized home, but she accepted the services of an attendant, provided by Rose, who nursed her faithfully in her last illness.

At her death the hut was pulled down, when a large sum of money was found buried beneath the hearth. It was in a leather bag with a scrap of paper, on which was scrawled: "For my niece, Rose Fyett." It was then understood that the goodwife Deb made in her dying moments referred to this treasure. It belonged to her, and was hers by the right of her children.

The story spread, however, that yet other sums of money might be found on the site of the hut, and many an expedition was made to excavate it. Neither gold nor silver has been found there, however, and the country people who take so much interest in them finally abandoned it.

Among the ruins of old Dunleath was discovered the inscribed tablet of stone. It was purchased by an old relic hunter, Angus Anderson, who sold it to a collector. He lived down all the old prejudices against himself—the old Dunleath has been forgotten, except by the oldest inhabitants of the neighborhood; and to-day there exists not a pleasant homestead or a more hospitable family than that of Norton of Dunleath.

THE RUBY RING.

(CONCLUSION.)

Contrary to Miss Connell's expectations, Baltimore was not burned that night, nor the inhabitants murdered. It was a white night at Baltimore," said Kitty, pricking up her ears.

"What! It's a bit of a trip I'd be making to-morrow night to place some ginsengs and some herbs in the hands of the French consul. Think of that."

"By the powers, that's a fine, decent price!" cried Larry, "Asthore, it's yer eyes that beguile me. What! Where is the embassy?"

"Kitty was not to be thrown off her guard. "He'll drop round and meet ye afore the boat sails," said she.

"I start from the pier at King's Head, seven miles below Flushing, avoursen. He comes on board an hour before midnight. I'll fly a white signal at the fore for him. Do ye understand?"

"Ay," said Kitty; "ye're not to mention the matter to any one, mind."

"I'll not," said she, "ye'll see me first. I'll not!" repeated Larry. "By the earth and the heavens, I'll not!"

Having arrived at this agreement, Kitty suddenly heard her mistress calling, and she slipped on her slippers and came some other time for that "one awale word."

The night that followed was admirably fitted for Kitty's plans. It was dark, starless and still. The lights were already going out in the town, when the girl, with her russet cloak drawn over her head, and a bundle under her arm, stole out to the byre, and ascended for the last time the ladder.

"Quick!" she whispered, opening the bundle and taking out a gown, a handkerchief, a frilled cap, and a tattered cloak. "Get into these, yer honor. This dress is the mistress's, and being tall, ye'll find it fits the fit. Hasten! It's a long way to King's Head, and time is to be gone."

"Ay," said she, "ye'll see me first. I'll not!" repeated Larry. "By the earth and the heavens, I'll not!"

"Ye may well say that," said the driver. "Gaff and his men."

With a smothered scream, Kitty started up, but Fitzroy seized her hand.

"Hush!" he whispered. "For God's sake, don't say a word on now—at all hazards, I must go on!"

"Ah, ye are lost, were!" groaned Kitty. The car jolted on. At the entrance of Flushing the two alighted and left it.

"No!" said Kitty, "let us make for the pier. It's myself as knows the way well. Follow me."

He embraced her rudely. "Ah, let me go!" cried Kitty. "Let me go or ye are a black-hearted coward, indeed!"

He answered with his knees. Like a blinding brand, Kitty tore away from him, and as he pursued, she caught from the dresser a big jug of buttermilk, and dashed it full in his wicked face. It streamed in yellow rivers over his flaxen quene and down his gold-laced uniform, extinguishing all his splendor in a breath. Gaff, choking with the milk, was a great oath, and Miss Connell, from the doorway, answered with a peal of hoarse laughter.

"Did I not tell ye the girl was none o' yer Dublin ladies?" said the old woman, dryly.

Gaff picked up his gold-laced hat, and went back to the slu-houses.

When the troops came tramping down the byre on the next day, he did not even so much as look toward the brown cottage on the edge of the flat-land.

More than a week passed. Daily Kitty crept up the ladder to the byre, and whispered her information to his love and kept quiet for Gaff and his men remained stubbornly at Baltimore, and to move was sure discovery. About this time Miss Connell began to receive her mail, and a tree of her Larry Blake to white bread and half bottles of wine in the kitchen. The girl grew pale and red by turns, but did not say it.

"Do ye mean to marry the lost, Kitty?" asked an old woman.

"Not I, ma'am," answered Kitty. "Then bid him begone. It's myself that has chosen a husband for ye."

That same night Larry Blake came creeping stealthily round the hedge, where Kitty sat and her mistress, with a lantern in his hand, and the black warm on her beautiful cheek.

"It's ye, Larry?" cried the girl, in delight. "It's myself that was just wishing ye near."

"Do ye mean it, avoursen?" said Larry, breathing like a furnace. "Wishing for me, were ye? Give me the pail."

She let him carry it to the kitchen, and even set him a stool on the hearth by the fire. All unused to such graciousness, Larry sat staring at his eyes, till suddenly he turned away, and in a moment disappeared in a twinkling.

"Larry, darlint," said she, with a soft glance from her long-lashed eyes, "I've a favor to ask of ye."

"Ask, avoursen," cried Larry, enraptured. "It's myself that come to-night to have one awale word with ye afore I go away."

"Where be ye going?" said Kitty, pricking up her ears.

"What! It's a bit of a trip I'd be making to-morrow night to place some ginsengs and some herbs in the hands of the French consul. Think of that."

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BY ISABELLE AMORY.

